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881 The cipós securing the laths of burity palm frond are cut, and the laths are pushed to the two sides like curtains, so that the vərẽkị and her retinue may pass through. Very slowly, always advancing and retreating, the group approach the aperture, delay further in leaving, moving forward and falling back, and finally arrive at the central place in the house where they continue their seesaw dance, changing places slowly at the front. It is believed that in this hour the girl is exposed to the greatest danger, hence her relatives hold her by the arms with the greatest care, supporting her in front and back and holding the feather crown firmly over her eyes.

881 The way Bates explains the care taken of the vərẽkị by the female relatives is
114 amusing. Convinced that he was witnessing a marriage, he writes: "During this whole time[a] the bride, decked out with feather ornaments, was under the charge of the elder squaws, whose business seemed to be seduously to keep the bridegroom at a safe distance until the end of the dreary period of dancing and boozing." And in the plate we see the "bride" between two women, while a little farther away is the "bridegroom," making sheep's eyes.

881 During this dance with the vərẽkị it was customary to sing certain verses no longer generally known today. A literal translation from the original Tukuna text follows.

[539] 1. Oh, what is it now that our vərẽkị has come among us, all covered with plumage?
2. Oh, what dost thou say now of her toucan feathers?
3. Like a caterpillar [in chrysalis] our vərẽkị was placed in seclusion by us!
4. [Challenging the guests' slight animation]: Art not thou absolutely ashamed to chatter like agoutis?
5. I shall not become a disagreeable anthill!

After five o'clock the group with the vərẽkị slowly commences to go forth into the yard in their backward-forward dance, continuing to dance there and passing several times around the house until sunset, when the group halts, the feather crown is raised from the vərẽkị's eyes, and her arms are released. A shaman lays
[789] a firebrand before her. With rapid movements of his fingers he removes some invisible object from his own head and, with a gesture of rolling it in front of his body, lays it on the firebrand. Then, handing this to the vərẽkị and pointing out to her a pupunheira tree—or, if there is none, any other tree—he tells her: "Throw it at our enemy!" She throws the firebrand against the tree, saying: "tñ̃ñ! ča-rị-u'anị[a] na ma dɔɔ[a]'ẽẽ!" (†; ča-rị u'anị[a], my enemy; dɔɔ[a]'ẽẽ, "not to bear, support"). From this moment on she can again move about freely without her relatives' protection; she then usually places herself behind one of the mummers to race with him, and so she continues to dance among the others until the hour of depilation arrives, before or shortly after midday.

881 *The depilation.*—Interrupting the dance, the paternal uncle pulls out a lock of
302 hair from the vərẽkị, then she is led to the center of the house, where she is seated on a tapir hide—nowadays this is almost always superseded by a tururí cloth. A jar full of paiauarú and a smaller pot containing a brew of this drink are placed before her. The uncle and another person with a rattle stick remain beside these jugs. Three to six women sit in a circle round the vərẽkị, on the hide, and immedi-

[a] Three or four days!

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Igarapé de São Jeronymo on the Solimões, which caused an extremely dangerous current costing many lives (see p. 67) and sometimes made it impracticable for anyone to enter the igarapé. The shaman Domingos čʊ'nekʲ—who was the last true chief of the Tukuna of this igarapé and was grandfather of the shaman Calixto daueru'kʲ—once passed this place with four other Indians and, finding the current extraordinarily violent, said: "Someone must have irritated the dyĕ'vaĕ!" He made an infusion of tobacco in a gourd, drinking it through his nostrils, rolled two long tauarí cigarettes and smoked for a long time. What he did later, Calixto, who was still a boy, did not see, because he slept during the ceremony, but by the next morning the rough current was smooth and quiet.

Later, he heard the old man tell how he had almost failed to return from his visit to the dyĕ'vaĕ, and say that now the demon was his friend because he had given him a tobacco infusion to drink through his nostrils. The demon had also told the name of the person who had enraged him, and since then the spot has not been dangerous. Twice a dyĕ'vaĕ tried to run aground on his back, "like on a beach," the canoe in which Calixto was traveling. On one of these occasions the leaves of the trees appeared to him like a kaleidoscope of colors from the reflection of the dyĕ'vaĕ's colors. Calixto saved himself by hanging onto the paddle with all his strength.

Once, during a thunderstorm, in a deep sinkhole (poço) in the Rio Solimões, near the old village of Santa Cruz dos Kokáma, Calixto saw a dyĕ'vaĕ raise his head and neck in the form of a hook above the waters of the river, slowly sinking again. When the head touched the surface of the water, there was a flash of lightning, produced by the demon's opening his eyes beneath the water. This dyĕ'vaĕ owns the fish in the Solimões[11] and appears as the eastern rainbow; the dyĕ'vaĕ of the western rainbow is the owner of potter's clay [see p. 46]. The legendary mortal enemy of all the dyĕ'vaĕ clan is tau/čipĕ', who, though of human origin, by his education in the subaquatic world acquired demoniacal qualities that at last turned him into an enemy of humanity.

tau/čipĕ'

A woman in the last stage of pregnancy went to fetch clay with which to make pottery. dyĕ'vaĕ, the owner of the clay, became infuriated, pulled her beneath the water, and swallowed her. Arriving home, he vomited her up and quartered her. He and his companions kept the fetus for roe. A female of the large rays asked for it, and they gave her the fetus. She cradled it carefully beneath the undersurface of her flat body, swimming with it to the calm water near the bank. There she deposited it, curving her body over it, and brooded over it a long time. At last she heard the child cry. She removed him and gave him suck. Then, with great care, so as not to drown him, she carried him to her dwelling beneath the water. The ray brought up the child and gave him the name of tau/čipĕ'. She told him that she was not his mother, who had been killed by the dyĕ'vaĕ. She made a magic basketwork, placed it on the boy's head, and interlaced his hair with it so that the hair, and with it the boy's strength, would increase.

tau/čipĕ' wanted to kill the dyĕ'vaĕ immediately, but the ray advised him not to try it yet, because he was still very weak. When he was six years old, his hair had already grown down to his belt, and he again insisted on attempting to fight the dyĕ'vaĕ, but his foster mother still would not permit it. Two more years passed, and by then his hair had grown down to his heels; then he wished to delay no longer. He broke off branches of the *tazyriro* tree[12] with fire ants

[11] See the legend of mɔ'manɛ'ki, pp. 151–153.
[12] *Tachygalia* sp. or *Sclerolobium* sp.?

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since even the dove motif, which so easily penetrates foreign mythologies, is not found in the Tukuna legends. 773 [777]

Legends of Celestial Bodies and Related Phenomena

The sun.—The slight importance the Indians attach to celestial bodies is worthy of note. Of the sun they told me that it was hot to the point of charring anyone who approached it, and that its headdress was a crown of red macaw tail feathers similar to that used today by a virgin at her puberty festival. I have seen the sun represented in this fashion three times, by a mask with a face carved in wood and with human, not demoniacal, features. There is a legend called "The Canoe of the Sun" (ɟakɟ'-ʏe'i-ń), but, try as I might, I did not succeed in recording more than a fragment. There is no longer anyone who can recite the entire story. 773 821

The Canoe of the Sun

A solitary youth was fishing when the Sun arrived in a canoe and asked him if he had caught anything. The boy answering in the negative, the Sun invited him to join him, since they should have caught something by this time. The youth sat in the prow while the Sun steered. The Sun called him which was the "Pathway of the Sun." Thus the youth realized that he was in the Sun's company, although the Sun had made the boy insensible to the heat. They paddled along. The boy thought that they were still paddling down here [on the earth] but they were already up there [in the sky]. A pirarucú this long [1 m.] appeared. The Sun seized the fish, threw it into the canoe, and baked it with his heat. 539

Some time later they halted in order to eat lunch in the canoe. The youth finished his share first. The Sun invited him to eat more, but the boy was obliged to decline with thanks. The Sun ordered him to bend his head forward, and then slapped him on the back of the head. At once a great number of cockroaches fell out of the boy. "That was the reason that you felt stuffed," said the Sun. The boy regained his appetite. They ate the entire fish. The Sun collected the scales and bones, put the fish together again, and threw it alive into the water.

The shaman Geraldo sent the soul of the murdered sorcerer u'iru to the "Canoe of the Sun" to be burned. [775]

The moon and stars.—Lunar eclipses are caused by the moon's meeting the demon vę"kɟča of the Jaguar clan, who battles with her. The word "vę"kɟča" is used for a hook made of a special wood in the form of an N, from which household implements (especially kitchen utensils) are suspended. The vę"kɟča of the heavens is Orion. The story of the terrestrial vę"kɟča and the incident which justifies his name of "hook" is related in the legend of čimɟdyuč' (pp. 148 ff.). If the jaguar in the eclipse should kill the moon, mankind would die; for this reason it is necessary that people aid the moon, scaring away her adversary with as much noise as possible. 821 773 789

I myself witnessed an attempt of this sort during the eclipse of August 25 and 26, 1942. As soon as the Indians were aware of the phenomenon—directly after the eclipse began—an alarm broke out that spread from house to house, up and down the igarapé, reaching to the inhabitants of the banks of the Solimões. Some beat with paddles on the keels of overturned, beached canoes; others belabored with the backs of their machetes a large plank resting on a support; others shot off firearms. Nino ęvēnɟ"kɟ, in whose house I was staying, seriously explained to his children what was taking place. The noise continued until the moon was completely free of the earth's shadow.

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881 Several hours after midnight, half a dozen of the girl's relatives, holding her around the waist while her eyes are covered by the feather diadem, [535] dance back and forth toward the wall, which is cut open with a knife so that they finally pass through into the main room. As she is now more exposed to invisible forces, the relatives dance with her until near dawn, then slowly go outside and circle the house. At sunrise they uncover her eyes and have her throw a burning stick against a pole marked to represent the "enemy." She now walks without assistance and dances freely with the others in the house.

[802] Depilation follows. The girl sits on the tapir hide in the middle of the room while three to six women pull out her head hair in little bunches, [534] accompanied by a small drum (tambor) and rattle. She endures the operation calmly, not even drink being given to alleviate the pain. Her paternal uncle in a vigorous speech then instructs her about her future duties as a marriageable girl.

The masks are now surrendered, each owner receiving a piece of roast meat. The disguises are piled around the girl, until only her head protrudes. The cloth is then ripped and the shreds thrown over the house beams. The turury cloths, which now belong to the host, are wound up and put away.

The seclusion room and roast-meat stand are dismantled. The participants divide the pieces, going in a solemn procession to toss them into [482] the river. The girl is carried on the tapir hide held by five or six men over their heads in the procession. She undresses, and, kneeling in [751] shallow water where a magic arrow protects her against water demons, she is washed by all the men who have magical powers. She then redecorates herself and joins the dancers, who perform in the house until the last drop of beverage is drunk. At the end of the feast, everyone [522] bathes hilariously together, tossing each other into the water.

[226] Formerly, in order to bring a large haul of fish, the girl was washed again after the feast with a solution of timbó at an appropriate spot on [789] the creek.

Six to eight months later there is a supplementary but less ceremonial feast to trim the girl's regrown hair.

841 Subsequent menstruations entail few restrictions: a woman stays in her yard because the spirits of certain trees may injure her with an arrow and because contact with her would make a man inefficient in any undertaking.

836 **Marriage and adulthood.**—Sexual intercourse with prepubescent girls is unthinkable; with young women it brings shame on the whole family. There is no instance of ravishment. Rape is a grave offense to the parents.

584 A request for marriage is made to the girl's paternal uncle, but if the girl refuses peremptorily, she cannot be forced to marry. Public notice